

Water for Life Implementation Review 2012-2015 (March 2017)

Rec #	Recommendation	Implementer(s)	Implementation Target	Last Status Update (Year provided)	2021 Status	Comments from Latest Update (Please include any new comments in track changes)
1	The Government of Alberta work with the federal government, Indigenous communities, rural and small municipalities and regional service providers to continue developing and investing in sustainable, regional drinking water and wastewater solutions (short-term)	Government of Alberta	Short-term	Implemented – alternative approach	Previously Implemented or Closed	This work has become a regular part of government business and our commitments towards the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We are engaging with First Nations and rural communities to help facilitate where issues with water access exist.
2	The Government of Alberta work with partners to: a) define source waters (including headwaters) in Alberta (short-term)	Government of Alberta	Short-term	Implemented – alternative approach		Since 2013, municipalities in Alberta are required to develop drinking water safety plans to assess risks to their drinking water systems. However, many municipalities lack the capacity to assess and address source water risks. Presently, several source water protection plans and initiatives have been developed or are underway to address risks to drinking water sources in Alberta. For example, source water protection plans have been developed for Edmonton, Camrose, Calgary, Town of Okotoks and Grande Cache. Other source water protection initiatives are currently underway for the Milk River – Whiskey Gap Aquifer and Sheep River sub-watershed. The Government of Alberta continues to provide technical support, monitoring, data and resources to support drinking water risks assessments and source protection initiatives as needed.
	b) inventory source waters (including headwaters) in Alberta (medium-term)		Medium-term	Implemented – alternative approach		See previous.
	c) monitor and assess source water quality, quantity and risks, and incorporate findings into policy, planning and decision-making processes (long-term)		Long-term	Implemented – unclear but met		The new Alberta Environment and Parks Environmental Monitoring and Science Division is assuming the task of providing water monitoring data for the GoA.
3	The Government of Alberta work with partners to: a) establish aquatic ecosystem health criteria (short-term)	Government of Alberta	Short-term	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)		The accountability for monitoring, evaluation and reporting of AEH in Alberta has been placed within the Environmental Monitoring and Science Division. AEH metrics include surface water quality, sediment quality, and non-fish aquatic biota. The last provincial-scale assessment of AEH (including these metrics) in Alberta rivers was published in 2007. Ongoing monitoring (as part of regular business) of water quality in major rivers and tributaries is a core priority for AEP. Water quality and sediment quality guidelines are the main criteria used to assess AEH. *As EMSD is lead on this, future inquiries should be directed to that area.
	b) undertake aquatic ecosystem health assessments for the seven land-use planning regions (medium-term)		Medium-term	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)		The accountability for the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of AEH in Alberta has been placed within the Environmental Monitoring and Science Division. Limited reporting of surface water quality (SWQ) will occur through the use of SWQ-Management Frameworks in select river basins (Athabasca and South Saskatchewan), but this will not include a comprehensive assessment of AEH. *As EMSD is lead on this, future inquiries should be directed to that area.
	c) incorporate findings into policy, planning and decision-making processes (long-term)		Long-term	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)		Ongoing monitoring, evaluation and reporting in Alberta waterbodies and reporting associated with SWQ-Management Frameworks (in current Regional Plans) can lead to management actions and decisions, as appropriate.

4	The Government of Alberta establish a transparent and accountable system for managing flows to advance <i>Water for Life's</i> goal of healthy aquatic ecosystems (short-term).	Government of Alberta	Short-term	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)	<p>The GoA is nearing completion of consistent policy guidance for regulatory decision makers for establishing required environmental flow needs and related aquatic environment considerations when making a water allocation decision. Guidance is needed, and would only be applicable, where no existing specific regulatory advice (e.g. in the form of water management plan, water conservation objection or land use planning framework) has established a specific criteria or requirement.</p> <p>Limited reporting of surface water quality (SWQ) will occur through the use of SWQ-Management Frameworks in select river basins (Athabasca and South Saskatchewan), but this will not include a comprehensive assessment of AEH. This has become a part of the ongoing work of the government.</p> <p>The GoA is taking a provincial approach, rather than a watershed based, and will consider regional variation and existing government approved watershed management plans.</p> <p>Environment and Parks participates and provides funding for several educational programs throughout the province. A list and brief description of each program is listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Respect our Lakes</u> – Educational awareness program to engage Albertans in lake stewardship. • <u>Aquatic Invasive Species & Whirling Disease</u> – Clean Drain Dry your Gear and Don't Let it Loose education campaigns to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species and diseases. • <u>Working Well</u> – The Working Well program provides well owners with the information and tools they need to properly care for their wells. • <u>Project Wet</u> – Facilitate program of hands-on, inquiry learning based water education for educators to use in Alberta. • <u>Wetlands education with NAWMP</u> – Supporting pilot of wetland education network. • <u>Land Stewardship Watershed Stewardship Grant</u> - Provides funding and sits on grant committee. • <u>Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPAC)</u> – Provides funding for WPACs across Alberta which have various education efforts. <p>Water Literacy Education – several educational projects have been started to address water literacy needs identified in the <u>Alberta Water Council Water Literacy Recommendations</u>, such as the <u>Water Channel</u>. This is and will continue to be ongoing work of Alberta Environment and Parks.</p> <p>Alberta Environment has created the Environmental Monitoring and Science Division headed by a Chief Scientist. The division includes the Science and Traditional Knowledge advisory panels. The role of the division is to provide proactive, objective reporting of scientific data and information on the condition of Alberta's environment. The Alberta Water Research Strategy continues to play a role providing fresh direction and focus that is consistent with the continuing knowledge and research needs of Water for Life: Alberta's Strategy for Sustainability.</p> <p>Alberta Environment and Parks' Strategic Plan continues to prioritize establishing and strengthening its community-based monitoring and citizen science initiatives. AEP currently supports a series of projects aimed at supporting Indigenous community involvement in monitoring through a range of activities from access to monitoring results, participation in Organization-led monitoring programs, and co-design and implementation of community-based monitoring projects.</p> <p>The Indigenous Lake Monitoring Initiative has been expanded to include additional</p>
5	The Government of Alberta clearly and periodically communicate how the regional planning process sustains healthy aquatic ecosystems, mitigates impacts to them and restores degraded aquatic ecosystems (short-term).	Government of Alberta	Short-term	Implemented: Alternative Approach (2019)	
6	The Government of Alberta work with partners to develop provincial water reuse policy, taking a watershed-based approach (short-term).	Government of Alberta	Short-term	Closed: not Appropriate (2019)	
7	The Government of Alberta work with partners to:	Government of Alberta	Short-term	Implemented: As Written (2019)	
	a) improve Albertans' understanding of the water management system by promoting awareness and knowledge (short-term)				
	b) ensure that science and research inform policy and decision makers, partners and the public through effective knowledge transfer (short-term)				
c) continue to engage partners and the public in research, citizen science, monitoring, and education initiatives (short-term)	Short-term	Implemented – alternative approach			

						lakes of interest to Indigenous Communities in order to support and enable Indigenous participation in provincial monitoring activities. AEP supports, through funding and in-kind technical support, the citizen-based Alberta Lake Management Society's lake water quality monitoring program, LakeWatch, which tracks a suite of physical, chemical and biological measurements that provide a continuing source of information on lakes in Alberta.
8	The Government of Alberta and partners improve the accessibility and availability of <i>Water for Life</i> documents and water-related information (short-term).	Government of Alberta	Short-term	Implemented – unclear but met		Alberta Environment and Parks is undergoing a reorganization of its website. The purpose is to improve user experience, refresh content where necessary, and provide better organization of content.
9	The Government of Alberta: a) clarify commitments to <i>Water for Life</i> partnerships (short-term)	Government of Alberta	Short-term	Implemented: As Written		Alberta Environment and Parks continues to work with the Water for Life Partners to clarify roles and responsibilities.
	b) continue to provide core resources and support to <i>Water for Life</i> partnerships (long-term)		Long-term	Implemented: As Written		Multi-year funding is recognized as an important enabler for the Department's strategic partnerships. Where possible multi-year grant funding will be used as the normal business practice in administering Department grant funds to Water for Life partnerships.
	c) confirm how partnerships' policy advice and plans (i.e., from AWC and WPACs) integrate into policy, planning and decision-making processes (short-term)		Short-term	Implemented: Alternative Approach		A presentation was made to the AWC Board and members on how policy advice and recommendations are used by the government. Integration of plans and policy advice is being done as part of the ongoing work of the government and is a focus of the role reviews of the <i>Water for Life</i> Partnerships.
10	<i>Water for Life</i> partnerships continue to investigate and leverage additional resources to support their work (long-term).	<i>Water for Life</i> partnerships	Long-term	Implemented – unclear but met		AWC: In 2017 the AWC received a commitment for consistent predictable funding for three years from AEP to support operations to achieve its mandate as laid out in the current business plan. Project specific funding is sought from sectors as needed.
				Implemented – unclear but met		WPACs: In 2017 WPACS received a commitment for consistent predictable funding for three years from AEP. WPACs have also explored many funding opportunities aside from the GoA, including: financial institutions, Alberta Ecotrust, Alberta Conservation Association, Community Facility Enhancement Program, municipalities, Federal Government Agencies and programs (EC, DFO, Habitat Stewardship Program), international non-government funders (WWF, TNC), forest industry (through FRIA or FRIP), oil and gas companies, energy providers like Epcor, environmental education grants, casino funds, endowment (e.g., Donor Directed Funds held by the Calgary Foundation), and individual public contributions. The Beaver Watershed (LICA) has developed a long-term partnership with the LICA industry group, who annually funds Alberta Lake Management Society testing of 10 lakes in the LICA region. This has been going on for over 10 years, and has resulted in excellent long-term data for the Beaver River Watershed and the province.
				Pending – to be completed (2020)	Pending – to be completed	WSGs: LSC continues to offer funding, information and resources for WSGs. LSC distributes its e-newsletter, Grassroots News, bi-monthly to nearly 800 subscribers, engaging the stewardship community, sharing the good work of watershed stewardship groups and providing information to enable and inform the stewardship community. LSC also shares stewardship news, events and funding via our social media channels which have a combined following of over 1400 people. In November 2019, LSC hosted a Stewards in Motion (SIM) event which engaged partner organizations such as the North Saskatchewan River Watershed Alliance and focused on providing expertise to stewardship groups in grant writing and fund development. Following this at capacity event and prompted by positive feedback from participants, LSC will look at hosting further SIM workshops in 2020-2021 to provide continuing support to community stewardship groups. In addition, the Watershed Stewardship Grant was renewed by Alberta Environment and Parks in 2019-2020 for an additional three years (until 2023). This longstanding grant program is essential to support the community-based projects

						and local efforts of WSGs. In 2019, LSC launched an online story-map, featured on the LSC website, which highlights all past recipients of the Watershed Stewardship Grant since 2006.
11	The Alberta Water Council continue to provide the forum for advancing water conservation, efficiency and productivity (medium-term).	Alberta Water Council	Medium-term	Implemented – unclear but met	Previously Implemented or Closed	Recommendation 1 of the 2017 report <i>Looking Back: Evaluating Sector Improvements in Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity</i> identified the AWC as the forum for major water-using sectors to continue reporting on CEP trends and progress at five-year intervals. The next updates are expected to be provided in 2020.
12	The Government of Alberta continue to work with partners to develop and monitor performance metrics and publicly report progress made towards achieving <i>Water for Life</i> goals.	Government of Alberta	-	Implemented – alternative approach		The GoA continues to enhance the performance reporting of partners through its funding programs and optimizes public communications through web presence, news releases, newsletter opportunities and departmental/cross-ministry committee work awareness-raising.

